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NOVA SONGISTS



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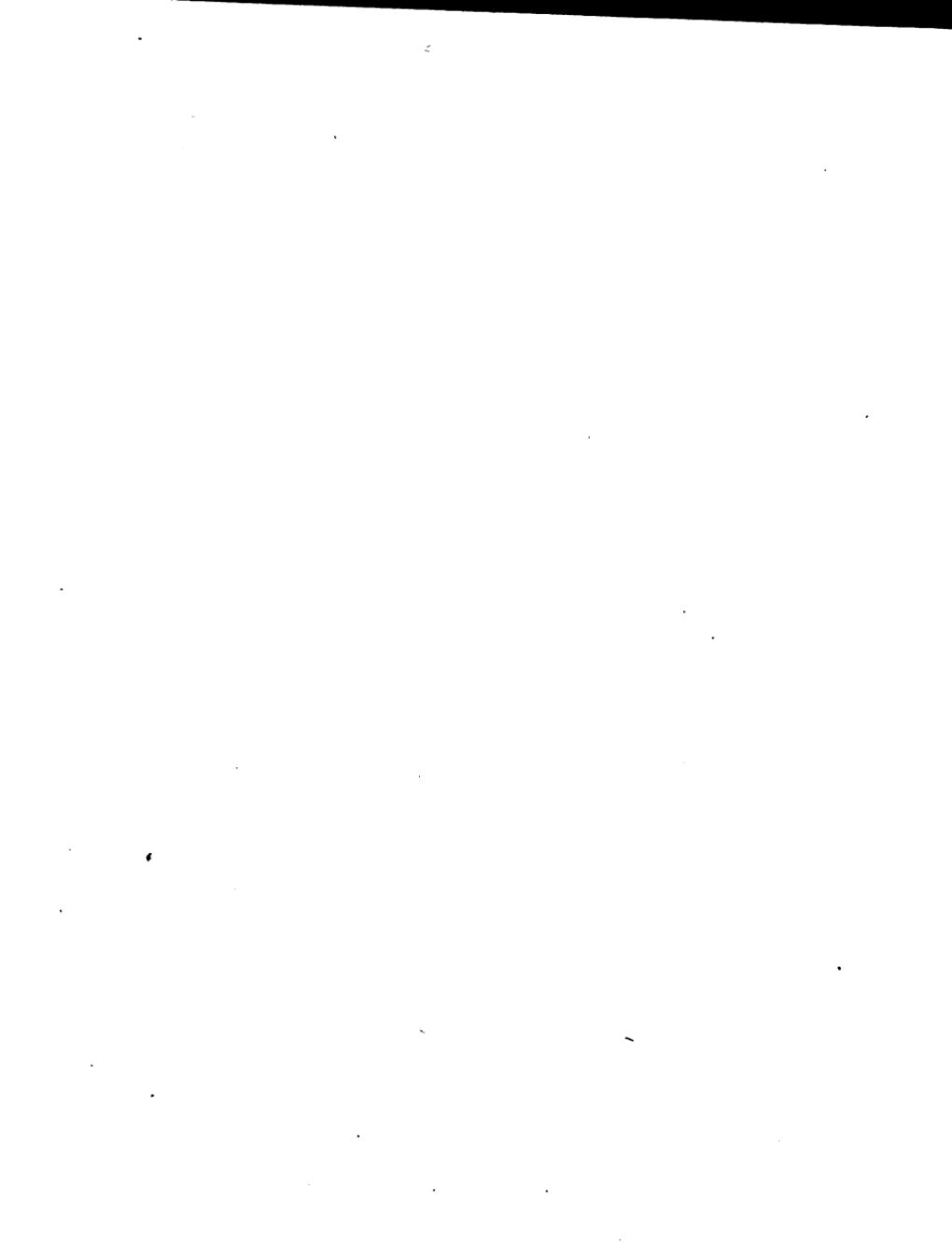
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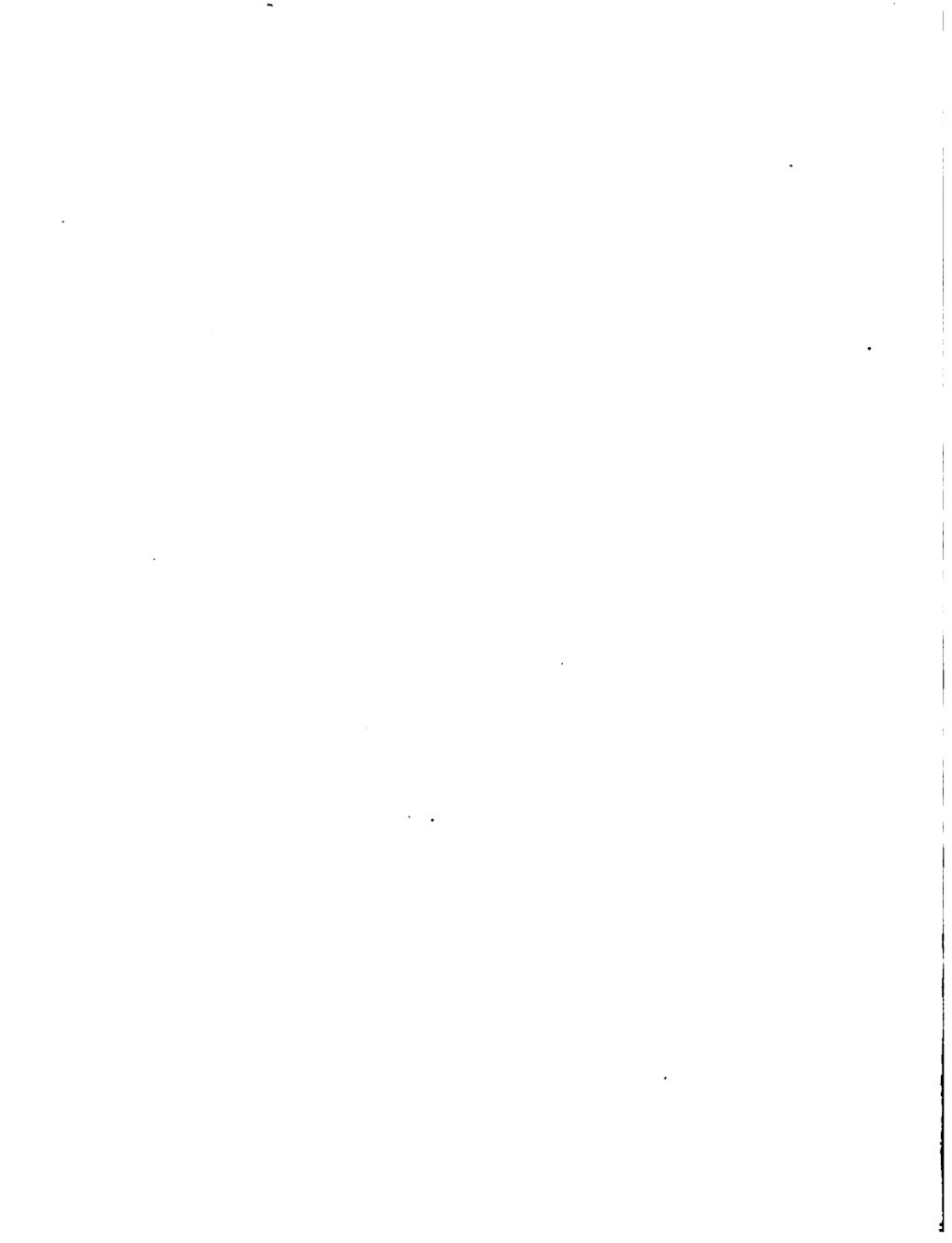
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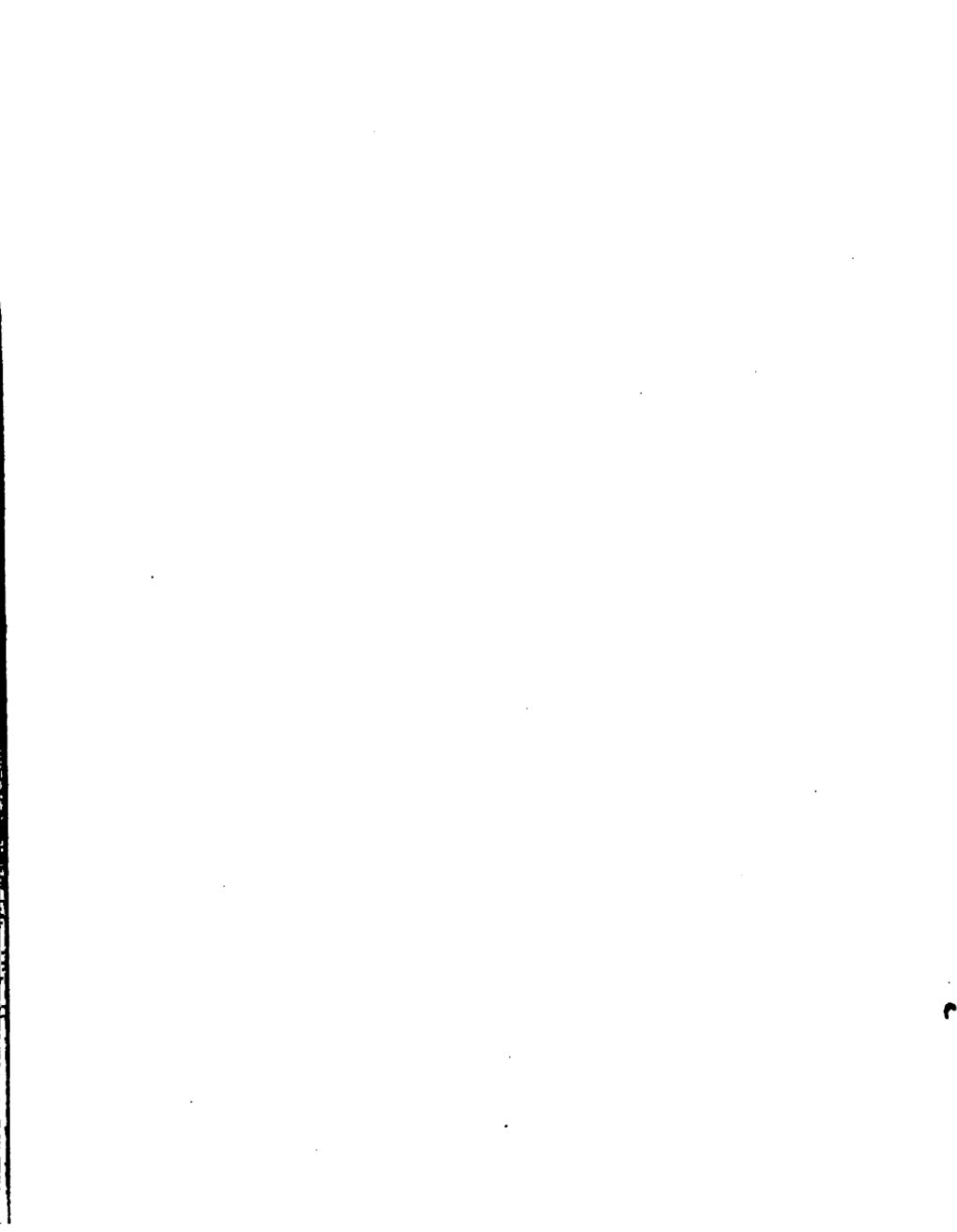
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SEQUOIA SONNETS

by CHARLES KEELER

PUBLISHED AT THE 
SIGN OF THE LIVE OAK
in **BERKELEY CALIFORNIA**

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By
Charles Keeler*

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SEQUOIA SONNETS





INVOCATION

THE fervid litanies of forest trees
 Float down as from some far celestial choir,
 The sun-rays filter in like shafts of fire,
 The incense of the branches haunts the breeze,
 Freighted with sacred woodland mysteries
 To thrill the wilding heart that would aspire
 To oneness with the great all-loving Sire
 And share in nature's vast amenities:

Aye, 'mid these mighty pillars I would be
 A priest of love to pay my inmost vows
 Here at this fane primeval and to lay
 A votive offering of fealty
 Upon the altar 'neath the fragrant boughs,
 As round me birds and wind and waters pray.



ASPIRATION

ARISE, O spirit, with th' awakening year!
Burst free above the clod that visits pain
Upon thy head; let not the sun in vain
Cast joyance round thee, nor let heav'n's fond tear
Unanswered fall on one so fair and dear!
For out of joy and sorrow shalt thou gain
Salvation, still upreaching to attain
More and still more of God's vast bounty here:

For earth and flesh are potter's clay to be
By spirit turned upon the wheel of life,
And love is craftsman skilled to set them free
In shapes of beauty torn from earthly strife;
So let us make an urn so true and fair
That gods bend down before its image rare.



RECKONING DAY

HOW light we venture on the road of bliss,
Regardless of love's heavy toll to pay,
When for our joy there comes a reckoning
day,
And fee of pain is wrung for every kiss!
For Fate makes certain that we never miss
The pang when what she grants she takes away
Altho' for restitution vain we pray,
And love must face the frowning Nemesis.

Yet would I claim love's sorrow reverently,
Full sure that all is right in life's great round,
And those who love unshaken spite of Fate
Shall have revealed the midmost mystery
And span the arc of heaven's farthest bound,
Where all our dreams-come-true in glory wait.



FIRST LOVE

CHILD of my heart, in life's exuberant spring
When wonder of bewildering passion wakes
The latent man, and youth aroused shakes
The robe of innocence aside—to thee I sing
My madrigal as migrant longings wing
And flowers of fancy sway round wooded lakes
Where rippling hope on pebbled shallows breaks,
And choristers of love about me ring:

Then from my dream of Arcady I start
Dismayed and wandering in the world alone,
Since the first flower of spring I may not hold;
But though fate cast our errant ways apart
And I have voyaged, by veering breezes blown,
Still does my love thy absent life enfold.



THE BEACON LIGHT

I SAILED about the cape of cold dismay
Until before me glowed a beacon light
Shining athwart the damp and fearsome night,
A gleaming lamp to show the chartless way
Unto the haven of the welcoming bay
Where love awaited me in radiance bright
To save me from my sea-awearied plight
In the bright promise of the glad new day.

How blessed to have her presence hallow me,
Her spirit interfused with mine until
It seemed were matched two mystic hemispheres,
Making the perfect globe of love, to be
Welded in concord of a common will,
Glowing in beauty through the mist of tears.



WORSHIP

NO image hewn by hand of man, no sign
By mortal craftsmanship conceived and
wrought,

No lesson by the holy scriptures taught
Can fill my spirit with the gift divine,
For I would quaff a more ethereal wine;

The wisdom of the ages comes to naught
Unless we find the phantom men have sought
And let its beauty on our faces shine.

In thee, my consecrated one, I hold
The mystic emblem prophets vainly seek;
Here is the vision and the sacrament,
Love's key unlocks the door and I am bold
And dare to gaze within and fondly speak,
And lo, in answer comes divine content.



HEART'S EASE

THE laughter of the gods is in the breeze,
Upon the sward the Maenads' footprints fall,
The flute of Orpheus lures us to the trees.

No longer sighs the wind with tearful showers,
Green are the sweeps of hill the sun has kissed,
The groves invite thee, dear nemophilist,
To care-free revel in their vernal bowers.
Come, let us parley not with weary hours,
But haste away to this joy-beckoning tryst
With vistas unto vales of amethyst
Where troop the timid hosts of radiant flowers.

Ah hark, amid the leaves a far-off call!
The old god Pan still offers us heart's ease
And beauty flings her mantle over all.



IN THE WILDERNESS

MY chosen one, our Paradise is here,
'Mid mountains, range on range in veils of
blue,
'Mid forests virginal of mighty trees,
With wild-wood rovers round us, void of fear,
In this great meeting place of spirits true
Where glad-voiced streams sing answer to the
breeze.

Here may our love unto the skies ascend,
Our lives grow rugged as the primal rocks,
Our thoughts wing joyously like migrant flocks
That toward eternal summer ever wend.
We'll find the upward trail without an end,
Our faith will shelter us from all the shocks
Of storm; no doors will bar us with their locks,
And every passer-by will be our friend.



WORK

HOW shall we thank the good God for this
meed
 Of love? Methinks in labor we should praise
The Father who vouchsafes these golden days,
And if for beauty's empery we plead,
Let it not be in word alone, but deed;
 'Tis not enough to wander in a haze
 And through the mist on loveliness to gaze,
Nay, we must fashion it to human need:

Ah sweet it is to thus collaborate,
 To translate nature to the form of art,
 To temper life's austerities with grace;
Beloved, you and I will consecrate
 Our love in service—do our little part
 To make life's tavern a more joyous place.



HOME

WHAT sheltering vines cling fondly round its walls,

And blowing bells, all fragrant, throng anear,
Whence little elfin faces gaily peer
In answer to the mother's joyous calls.

Then by the hearth before the logs ablaze,
When winter rains upon the shingles beat,

The little eyes look up in sweet amaze
At fairy lore with wonderment replete,
Until the Sandman round the circle strays,
And Mother leads to rest the weary feet.

Then thou art mine alone when silence falls,
O love, with widening life more tried and dear,
In thy rapt eyes the beam of radiant cheer,
More prized than all the pomp of regal halls.



FRUITION

THE passing years bespeak but love's increase,
Slow surging on against the stream of fate
That knows not thee nor me, in fond debate
Seeking some better victory than peace,
Some end beyond life's all too transient lease,
Some triumph in the spirit's halls of state
Where, on the threshold, still in hope we wait,
Bidding the clamor of dull care to cease:

And if some angel, dight as is the child,
Comes smiling with a kiss upon her lips
To print upon your forehead and on mine,
Should we not to all cares be reconciled,
In love's supreme fruition and eclipse,
Thus sharing in a heritage divine?



THE TOKEN

MY hearts of hearts, we are as seekers bent
On wresting truth from phantoms surging
past;

We crave the real and long to hold it fast;
The starry concourse thrills with wonderment,
The cosmic dust sweeps on with blind intent,
Evolving upward in a pageant vast
Of life that swims and crawls and finds at last
Its wings to waft it toward the firmament:

And, when we strive to read the riddle deep,
God sends His little messenger to say:
“Come follow me upon the upward way
Of light; the answer in my heart I keep.”

And, as we bent above our child, we saw
The token of the everlasting law.



MADONNA

I need not Raphael's masterly design,
Nor Botticelli's grace of flowing line
For my Madonna. Let me rather see
Your smile, sweet mother, with your trinity
Of treasured children; in your arms the wee
Sweet birdling with her features rarely fine,
And rapt blue eyes through which messeems doth shine
That love betokening divinity:

For is not God in every baby soul
That looks so trustful in its mother's eyes,
So sure of love's unconquerable might?
Each fond Madonna sees a blessed goal,
However dim, foreshadowed in surmise,—
Around her darling's head a halo bright.



A REDWOOD REVERIE

IN hushed splendor of high redwood towers
Looming serene amid the mountains still
Where elf-like o'er the boulders croons the rill,
Communing with earth's elemental powers,
Where smile from shadowy glades the jocund flowers,
Where wild azaleas perfume rare distill,
Where flares the mimulus with golden thrill,
I dream with thee through dim enravished hours:

We seem as Hamadryads of the grove
And one with every wanton bird that sings,
Exalted past the blighting touch of strife;
In this celestial temple, lost, we rove,
Transported amid primal mystic things
That wrap us round with beauty beyond life.



WANDERERS

A Persian traveller, asked what land he found
Most fair, replied: "Where my beloved
dwells;

The desert beggars groves with flowing wells
And waving palms if I but hear the sound
Of her sweet voice and tread upon the ground
Her scarlet shoes have pressed; she conjures spells
Of glory I would capture in gazelles
Rhymed with a grace that to her praise redounds."

And thus when you and I through southern seas
Wandering beheld fair tropic isles agleam
With the lush verdure of transplendent trees
And toppling crags where silver waters stream,
Your presence arched with rainbows all the days
And cast an opalescence round my ways.



GOOD-NIGHT AFAR

GOODY-NIGHT, beloved, may the summer air,
Charged with the sweet elixir of mid June,
Fan your dear eyelids till the peerless boon
Of placid sleep steals o'er your spirit rare,
And you become a frail field-lily there
Amid the hay-mounds 'neath the silver moon
Where all the fairies will be dancing soon
About your presence, dear beyond compare:

Then will you dream of home and all the bliss
Of happy babies babbling 'mid the flowers,
Of all the rich soul treasure that is ours;
Beloved wife, I print my spirit kiss
Upon your lips and call good-night afar,—
God keep you safe, my light of hope, my star!



TRUST

WHAT seest thou, my mild-eyed Eloise,
With steadfast gaze beyond the show of
things?

Frail sylph of woods and waters, round thee clings
A haunting presence of strange mysteries.

Aureoled with gold, a lily in thy hand,
I see thee gazing through the Golden Gate
As one who looks beyond mortality,
As one awaiting a divine command
To fare away to some ethereal state
Where all thou dream'st of beauty thou shalt see;

And verily the Hand that gently frees
Thy spirit from the flesh and gives thee wings
And speeds thee on celestial journeyings,
Is His who guides in love our destinies.



REWARD

WHEN earth's foundations shuddered with a
 might

 Of some demonic throes, and ravening fire
Roared through the city with insane desire,
When day on day and ghastly night on night
The titan torch lit up the sea with light
 Of ravished homes in one colossal pyre,
 And fleeing hosts aghast beheld the ire
Of demons speeding in devouring flight,

Thou wert a ministering angel, strong
 In spirit but of flesh too frail to be
In such disaster caught and swept along
 Through woeful strain and fire-wrought misery;
But to reward thy loving service high,
God called thee closer to Him in the sky.



HER MESSAGE

BECAUSE I see thy gentle form consigned
To fire and turned to ashes in an hour,
Shall I mistrust the all-compelling power
Of love, and to Eternal Right be blind?
Some say the spirit dies upon the wind,
And that corruption is its only dower,
While others vow Nirvana is a tower
Of refuge for the world-awearied mind.

But thou art not a dew-drop swift to glide
Into God's ocean of unending sleep;
From chrysalis thou seekest free and wide
Realms o' the leal amid the star-strewn deep;
And if men ask me how in truth I know,
I answer: "Thou hast come and told me so."



THE GATE

A H Eloise, my consecrated mate,
Who loved me as an angel bending low
From azure realms of peace, until the glow
Of your gold nimbus shone to consecrate
Each hour vouchsafed me from the hands of Fate,
As from your tender eyes I learned to know
The calm beneath life's evanescent woe,
Why wert thou called through that mysterious gate?

But let the will of the All-wise be done,
And as thou farest on with senses freed
A little nearer to the goal unwon,
To stay thy progress would I never plead,
Knowing thou wilt be strong to gain the light,
Trusting the great world plan is based in right.



TO THE MOON

LADY who sleeps in peaceful tenderness,
Climbing the dark pavilioned blue of night,
Drifting upon thy destined way of light
To glad the weary hours of night's distress
With silvery gleams of silent loveliness,
Stealing through latticed clouds that breathe
delight,
Dreaming of orbéd melody, the rite
Of starry conclaves steeped in blessedness:

Thou art endeared to me because I see
Thy fair enchantments mirrored in my tide,
Because my love is pure and bright like thee,
My love who roves o'er spirit waters wide;
I charge thee, lady moon, companion be
Unto my well-beloved wand'ring bride!



THE ARCH ICONOCLAST

UNCEASINGLY the Arch-iconoclast
Beats his clay images to formless dust,
And all their beauty wantonly is thrust
To earth, as if he recked not of the past
Wherein their loveliness was shaped to last
Aeons beyond the day their shattered trust,
Tossed to the winds with ashes and with rust,
Makes doubting mortals gaze on life aghast:

But well I know the Angel Death is He
Who breathed the breath of life in the cold clay,
And when this shell of flesh He casts away,
'Tis but the means to set the spirit free,
Awakened from its dreaming by His kiss
To life more vivid and to deeper bliss.



THE GARDEN

A RUNDO reeds are breathing low a hymn,
From ocean blown, and bowers of bamboo;
Shelter the tremulous bells of gold and blue,
The iris waves along the pathway's rim
In regal beauty that you loved to limn
In broidery round my songs, and thus indue
Their lines with subtle graces caught from you;
Fragrance of violets floats from shadows dim.

And O the roses, how their beauty yearns
For kiss of her who wanders 'mid the stars!
The jassemine's perfume thrills me—'tis her
breath!
Now through the Golden Gate the sunset burns,
The clouds across the sea are molten bars
That stand betwixt my bow'r and love and death.



THE WRATH OF GOD

WHAT mighty end impels the wrath of God?
What means it when from sullen thunder
cloud

Zeus flashes down his sword to strike the proud
Disdainful mortal? Why do winds applaud
When great Poseidon claims the crew o'er awed?

Why does the Reaper Grim, with sable shroud
Enfold the babe and sage in one drear crowd,
And racking pain the zest of life defraud?

Ah he alone who peers behind the moon
Can read the riddle of the solemn rune,
Or he who lifts the mask of flesh and sees
The anodyne of love beyond all pain;
To find the vale of the Hesperides
We cross the grave and Saturn's rings attain.



TO A DYING FRIEND

SOON will the pain that racks thy weary frame
Be ended; ah, 'tis sweet to contemplate
Such respite and in quiet trust to wait
The beckoning hand of love and hear thy name
Called by the voice of Death, beyond all blame,
To know thou art a soul elect of Fate,
To pass the threshold of the mystic gate,
To feel thou art exalted, yet the same:

And, when thou strayest in the realms of light,
I pray thee find my radiant damozel
And bear my love and tell her all is well;
Her missive found me through the storm of night;
I kiss thee, friend, and when she comes to thee,
This token give my wandering love from me.



THE LINK

GO forth, my sonnet, as a holy link
'Twixt life and death, and bind them each to
each;

For I, unwearied, spirit-lore would teach,
Even as we stand upon the dark dread brink,
Looking beyond, yet fearful, while we drink
The hemlock, lest the bourne we never reach;
Yet falter not at death's resounding beach,—
In vain from this last voyage mortals shrink!

There have returned good tidings o'er the sea
And out of the damp mist of fearsome death
Glad voices have been drifting in to me,
Full of the wonder of immortal breath;
So be, my sonnet, to the unconsoled
A link of love, the wandering soul to hold.



SHADOW REALMS

THE call of voices from the halls of sleep,
The whisper of the dead to listening ears,
The haunting beauty of consoling tears,
Bidding the watcher gaze upon the deep
Of star-embossed dome where spirits keep
Their vigils with the music of the spheres,—
These are the signs that lift the weight of years
And tell us of the harvest we shall reap:

Not bitterness nor sorrow have we sown,
Although our earthly joys fall, one by one,
To leave us hungering for love alone;
Beyond, above, the glory of the sun
Awaits our coming in the realms that lie
In beauty past the reach of mortal eye.



SORROW

SORROW, the bringer of dun clouds of rain,
The chastener of spirits, when the air
Is murky and no work of God seems fair,
The goad to prod the weary heart with pain,
The cleanser of soul's immaterial stain,—
Thy weariness I oft have had to bear
Doubtingly o'er that deep morass Despair,
Where all life's loveliness seems warped and vain:

Then shafts of sun come through the rain to me,
And lo, the peerless arch of mist-built bow!
Telling of strife and triumph that shall free
Mortality from weight of mortal woe;
Telling of love and beauty that shall be
A talisman to yearning hearts aglow.



THE AWAKENING

SO blindly erst I loved a spirit true
It seemed through life and death no other soul
Could answer mine; as if the mystic scroll
Of joyous life were written through and through
With her blest name, as if the heaven's blue
Would be forever dulled and only dole
My weary lot, if Fate should take its toll
And leave me clasping but a wreath of rue:

But O the larger vision, when we learn
How great is love, though late or soon it pass,
How all is treasured in the heart's deep store!
And though we seem to lose and vainly yearn,
As one who looketh darkly in a glass,
We mount in glory as we love the more.



THE MEED OF PAIN

STRENGTH shall be granted thee for every need
In life's unfolding with its strain and stress,
Dear heart, and though sometimes the weariness
Of tear-bedimmed hours seems hard indeed
To bear, we know our cares are but as seed
That some day shall upspring in flowers, to bless
The world with loving deeds of tenderness,
When hearts that pine, from sorrow shall be freed:

So trust in the eternal Cosmic Right
That may not cast away one living soul;
The morning breaks, however dark the night,
Though long the course, each runner wins his goal;
Stout hearts expand to meet the shocks of fate,
Bay crowns the brow that sorrows consecrate.



FEAR

BID from thy breast corroding fear, and all
The crew unhallowed that around it flock;
Turn it away, and thy heart-casement lock
Against its dark insistence; be no thrall
To any such, for in thy spirit hall
Thou art the master and can soothly mock
At coward fancies with their boisterous knock
Thumping upon the heart's impervious wall.

My poor wild bird that beats against the bars,
Be still, 'tis fear that makes thee bruise thy wings;
Imprisoned, thou mayest soar amid the stars
E'en though mortality about thee clings;
And when thou seest the ogre grimly peer,
Sing, all oblivious of the wraith of fear.



TODAY IS THINE AND MINE

TO DAY is thine and mine, and we today
Shall build our cloud pavilion out of thought
Transcending earth—for atom's whirl is
naught

But symbol of the soul's unceasing play—
So why not seize the moment and away
On faery wings to shadow region fraught
With deeper meaning than the world has taught
To mortals vainly fumbling o'er the clay:

Then falter not, but pile unceasingly
Thought upon thought, and tone on melting tone,
And love on love, until we reach the zone
Of ether where the blest immortals, free
From sordid and confining fealty,
Live all the beauty we have vaguely known.



BEHIND THE PAGEANT

ELUSIVE phantasms glide across the scene,
The strange kaleidoscope of shifting life
Fades in the twilight with the waning strife;
O what behind the pageant may I glean,
What sign of truth in phantom groves serene,
Where dwells my new-arrived spirit wife,
And all the halls of death with joy are rife
Because she joined them in their bright demesne!

Lo through the hushed night there softly steals
A whispered breath from immaterial voice
Saying: "O heart of hope, fear not the goal,
Love is unfading and its light reveals
All truth wherein the pure of heart rejoice;
It healeth and its power maketh whole.



THE NEW LIFE

ABOUT me throng the spirits of the dead
To reconcile old hopes with new desire;
I would restore the immemorial fire
Of love and pity to hearts wearied,
Learning the solace of the souls now fled,
Toward whose effulgence vainly we aspire,
Mounting the empyrean tire on tire,
And leaving far below all haunting dread.

Ah, when with stress of storm the path is dark,
To hear a wild bird singing toward the sun,
To see the light that never may be won
Save by the heart of love which doth embark
On perilous voyages unto alien strands
Where deep seas murmur on the golden sands!



FROM THE STARS

A presence of ethereal splendor came
Out of the seventh heaven to hover near
With sweet consolement in her radiant cheer,
Whispering, "Dearest," when I asked her name;
Across the void with thought's unerring aim
She sought me to dispel unhallowed fear,
The darkness glorifying till the dear
Celestial wraith was luminous as flame:

Love was the cry of transubstantial lips,—
Ah, stifle not the heart-beat nor the breath;
What nectar of the gods the wild bee sips!
Seek thou the honey-dew of love till death
Calls thee to stand on Saturn's summit far
Where warring thoughts no more thy love will mar.



LONGINGS

BEAUTY ineffable shall give us power
To build our dreams into undying truth,
Treasuring at nature's shrine unwithered
youth,
And dying, leaving as a mystic dower
Our hall-mark, fashioned as a fadeless flower,
A talisman to spell all forms uncouth
To grace and beauty; then will come, in sooth,
The song of triumph from th' muezzin's tower:

So let us conjure beauty out of thought,
Impregnate matter with celestial seeds
Until it thrills with a beatitude,
And, from the dross of earth sublimely wrought,
Ascends to heaven in consecrated deeds
That sanctify our days with quietude.



PRISMS

UPON a prism broke a sun-bright beam
And rippled forth a million melting hues
From red and green through all the subtle
blues

To tender violet. As in a dream
Upon a heart a ray of love did stream,
And broke in hopes and fears that fain would use
All beauty which the eager mind induces
In token of the thronging thoughts that teem:

From infra-red to ultra-violet
Burns the heart-passion with bewildering fire;
Fears break in hopes, and hopes new pangs beget,
For what is love save quenchless soul-desire?
So weigh not love in pleasure nor in pain,
Yearning for harmonies it ne'er may gain.



THE QUEST

WE wander aimless on the world's highway,
The only goal, above our heads a stone;
We clutch at happiness and grasp a moan!

O fare no more the darksome road Dismay,
Where lurk fear-spectres with their dread array
Of blandishments they proffer to atone
For hunger of the heart that waits alone
Upon the threshold at the shut of day.

No, knock upon the postern and accost
The seneschal and bid him ope the gate;
Within the castle is the one we lost
In that dark woodland in the spell of Fate,
And if we dare to joust with the Black Knight
We may release our Lady of Delight.



SELENE

A mystery is in the after-gloam
When heav'n is splendid with wide-wandering
spheres,

And from the beetling heights the world appears
Swooning in dusk beneath the vasty dome;
Amid the airy oak-groves have we clomb,
Leaving the canyon's shade and all the fears
And fevers of the day and vanish'd years,
As on through wild nocturnal groves we roam.

Beyond the Bay there looms a mystic fire;
O gods, Selene cometh, and now the gloom
Grows luminous as Latmos, when, above
The sleeping shepherd, faint with mad desire
Hovers the radiant presence of his love,
And all the darkness bursts in rapturous bloom!



THE PATH

HEDGED in by ceonothus and wild sage,
A path winds steeply up the ribbed height
Unto a crystal fount of rare delight—

A spring of sweet nepenthe to assuage
All heart-ache and arrest the creep of age.

Fate took me by the hand in sable night
And led me up the pathway in despite
Of all enchantments of the world-wise mage:

Then, dipping in the spring a chalice gold,
She held the sparkling liquor to my lips,

But ere one drop I quaffed, the proffered bowl
Withdrew and left me lingering mute and cold,
Sick for the honey draught the will bee sips,—
Heavy with longings past the heart's control.



IN THE SILENCE

SOMETIMES we fain would still all vocal tone
To catch the soul's deep under-throb and hark
To inarticulate whisperings that mark
Our transit unto spirit haunts unknown,
Where in the all-enfolding shadow-spheres have
flown
Beloved friends beyond earth's broken arc,
With wafture of fond thought, as we embark
On love's far voyage, by Fate's wild tempest blown.

Ah, in the silence how the heart-beat speaks!
The hushed air is teeming with sweet song
When there is meeting of fond fevered cheeks,
And all of passion surges new and strong,—
Songs without words that sob and pray and sing
Float through the stillness as to heav'n they wing.



A NIGHT WALK

DULL drifts of fog festoon the gloomy sky,
Dark'ning the wold and woods with leaden
gray,

As o'er the hills I take my homeward way;
The city lights far twinkle and the sigh
Of the salt breath of ocean wavers by,

Fragrant with incense from the leaves of bay;
And, past the bridge, where Druid live-oaks pray,
Fantastic figures flicker far and nigh:

But what reck I of fantasies of fear

When through my being surges glowing hope?
Amid the night gleams out thy image dear,

Strengthening my heart with phantom ills to cope;
Love's amulet around my neck I wear,
A talisman 'gainst cloven-footed care.



THE GIFT

THE ghost of ancient Hellas not in vain
Cries down the yearning ages, Beauty! Nay
We crave this birthright sordid men betray,
Soul-nurture we aspire to attain,
The guerdon of immortal spirit-gain,
Or else live but as worldlings for the day,
Thralled in the specious lure of pleasure's sway,
Though heavenward yearnings beckon us through
pain;

Bewildered by the want of beauty's light—
For beauty is love's self, and all else night—
Day dawns to bring with slow unfolding time
This hallowed gift to cheer our solitude,
This sun-gold of the heart for ends sublime,
A light to quell the flesh-and-spirit feud.



THE ARTIST

NATURE he knows and bends to work his will,
Creator of a world of beauty free,
A world of love, of life, of mystery,
For passion's deeps shall all his being fill
With life's mid secret, and with thought distill
Its chrism, that such loveliness may be
Filched out of heaven to gladden those who see
The vision and find solace in its thrill.

Mark you the thrush, wild chanter in the shade,
To hidden list'ning ear enrapt he sings,
And love responsive greets him in the glade;
Such is the artist who elately wings
Through phantom groves to chant at heaven's gate
A hymn of praise, and claim his boon of Fate!



FULFILLMENT

LAUGHTER and tender raillery and mirth,
And pleached arms and lips to fond lips
pressed,
And pleading eyes and fervent cheeks caressed,—
O tell me how in these love had its birth,
Was nursed and nurtured till it proved its worth,
Through adolesence swift, by pain oppressed,
Sweet pain too rapturous to be confessed,
It clapped its wings and heavenward fled from earth;

It heavenward flew, but soared not hence alone,—
Twin spirits fondly sought the star-meshed blue,
There in Elysian meadows to atone
For all on earth that is not fair and true,—
For all unloveliness that breedeth sorrow,
Sowing today that bells may blow tomorrow.



WITH LILIES

BELOVED, let these flowers find your heart
And speak for me, being absent; let there rise
A subtle sweet perfume to greet your sighs,
Let all their modest loveliness impart
What I would whisper thro' the tears that start
Whene'er your beauty thrills my longing eyes;
Ah how my eager fancy toward you flies,
Quicken^g with fond desire where e'er thou art!

'Mid these, my flowers, thou, the flower queen,
Reignest in realms of fay on fancy's throne;
Afar you rove o'er mountain meadows green
Whilst I await you in my forest lone,—
Forest of branched thoughts that spread their shade
To darken life's mysterious woodland glade!



PEACE

PEACE unto thee, dear heart, shall be my
prayer,—

Peace of the lulling wind through summer's
sheen,

Peace of the new-mown grain in fields serene,
Peace of the wild rose perfuming the air,
Peace of the clouds that drift above all care,

Peace of the dusk when in the east is seen
Emerging radiant, the dark boughs atween,
The queen of night in all her beauty rare:

Aye, verily my love shall seek and find
God's benison benign of holy peace
That passeth understanding, that can wind
Earth children in its spell when sorrows cease,
When, like the flock returned from stormy wold,
Our thoughts are gathered safe in God's great fold.



THE DIVINE ARTIFICER

THE master builder shapes his instrument,
Seasoned and tuned and tempered by his skill,
For some rare artist with the mystic thrill
Of love enkindled to loose all the pent
Commotion of the heart in concords blent,
Ranging from whispers breathed low and still
To tones of thunder from the gods' great mill,
Resolving strife to infinite content;

And God has made His instrument supreme,—
The matchless form of man, and to His son,
The master-player, said: “My will be done;
Behold this token, this creation dream;
Upon it play life's rhapsody sublime,
That love and beauty may exalt thy prime.”



THROUGH STORM

LOVE cannot always ride a pleasant sea,
Lulled by soft breezes o'er caressing blue;
Life's frigate, packed with eager thoughts for
crew,
Wherein affianced souls sail gloriously
On Time's wide ocean toward their destiny,
Shuns not the tempest, though its wrath may strew
Drear shores with wreckage of the fair and true,
Or whelm all longings in eternity:

But God, I thank thee for the might of storm
To toss and buffet love and test its power,
That when the splendid sun's resplendent form
Bursts through the sullen clouds that darkly lower,
The evanescent arch of light will shine,—
Token of everlasting love divine.



OREAD MUSIC

HARK, mystic pipings, sweet songs from the trees!—

Syrinx beguiling the wild woodland hours,
Pan-pipes in pine-boughs and foot-falls of flowers,
Paeans of gladness afloat on the breeze,
Harps on the cliff-heights and flutes on the leas,
Blown by the satyrs to wood-nymphs in bowers
Hid in the shadow of tottering towers,
Breathing weird music the wild-folk to please;

Out of the forest I followed it here,
Finding an Oread eerily singing
Just where the river's wild waters career,
Glorious in foam-spray their gossamer flinging
Down from the cliff's where my wood-fay is calling,
Luring me on through her rainbows entralling.



DAYBREAK

AS in a dream, in transcendental halls
I drift along 'tween domed crags and spires,
And hear wild woodland minstrels sweep
their lyres
Of soughing pines and lyric waterfalls,
And pastoral of morning forest calls,
A glorious concourse of ecstatic quires
When soaring peaks the morning sunburst fires
And freedom breaks the bonds of pain-bound thralls.

Dead love, reborn, arises in my dream,
Dead hopes, rekindled, burn on heights afar,
Dead promises of pleasure round me teem
With naught the resurrection spell to mar;
This haunt of gods, by love's mysterious might
Glows in a glory of unearthly light.



THE SILVER FIRS

THE silver firs are silent, as the moon
Peers thro' the darkness o'er the mountain rim,
And hushed voices haunt the shadows dim;
The poor-will iterates his mournful tune,
The brooklet gurgles low its ghostly rune,
The choir of zephyrs chant their evening hymn
As all the vestal stars their tapers trim;
O night of nights, thou bring'st a glorious boon!

For I have builded a pavilion rare,
A haunt of dreams amid the whispering pines,
A bower of boughs of incense past compare
That glisten as the moon upon them shines;
Here nature wild and free shall be my guest—
Beloved night, God watches while I rest!



BY TENAYA'S WATERS

BESIDE the torrent hurled from mountain snow,
On boughs of spruce I made my forest bed,
The Half Dome toppling fearsomely o'erhead,
With giant boulders, earthquake-tossed, below,
And stately pine-trees, startled by the glow
Of leaping flames amid the darkness fled,
Screening the stars that 'tween their needles shed
Pale gleams upon the wild white waters' flow!

Methinks my guardian angel must have turned
My unreluctant steps to this fond haunt,
Here to commune with nature wild and wide,
To feel the love for which my soul had yearned
Peopling the dark with beauty, and the want
Of lonely spirit hunger satisfied.



DREAM MAGIC

WOULDST thou the hidden ways of sleep
explore

Upon the paths of peril where our dreams
Chaotic beckon us with fitful gleams
That fall upon forbidden astral shore
Where pilgrim feet have seldom fared before,
Venturing upon dim moon-illumined streams
With shadow wraiths wherewith the darkness teems,
And drinking at the fount of hidden lore?

Low burns the lamp, the midnight air is still,
In measured cadence sinks the rhythmic breath,
The body trembles to no mortal thrill,
Lapsing into a coma nigh to death;
Then how the spirit scapes its prison keep
To revel in the star-strewn fields of sleep!



MASTERY

THIS fine-wrought instrument, mysterious frame,
Is mine to use and master whilst I climb
From sense to spirit on unceasing time,
To fondly guard while life's consuming flame
Burns in the sanctuary which I claim
Mine own for worship in life's ardent prime,
This body fashioned to a form sublime,
This arrow winging with a spirit aim!

And as I rule the flesh, from pain I rise
Triumphant, as the eagle through the cloud,
Circling aloft until in mute surprise
He finds his pens have borne him past the shroud,
Earth-folding, in caerulean realms the peer
Of every spirit that hath coped with fear.



MUSIC

O could my craft the rhapsody repeat,
The rapture of wild tones of tremulous song
Sweeping aloft like some celestial throng,
Seeking their king upon his throne to greet,
Where love and harmony eternal meet
And the immortals triumph over wrong,
Gloriously chanting as they speed along
On outspread wings that rhythmically beat!

But O how swiftly sweeps each tone to death,
Impetuously rushing toward its doom,
Even as thy quick-following breath on breath
Leads thee along the path where waits thy tomb;
Nay, say not so, dear heart,—the song, the soul
Immortal lasts past fleeting time's control.



EVENING REDWOODS

WILD winds are singing on the mountain height,
Sweeping the harps of redwood boughs asway,

Soughing and sobbing in their endless way
From misty sea, fog-laden in their flight
Landward, upon the van of falling night,
As with my love amid the woods I stray,
Gathering rathe berries and a glowing spray
Of crimson-turned madronyo foliage bright;

Here crouches the shy fox; the timid deer
Bounds from the covert like a thing of air,
Nuthatch and chickadee are calling near;
The trees absolve us from all human care,
And we are one with nature's pensive mood,
Hushed by the benison of solitude.



A NIGHT THOUGHT

UNTAMED spirit, beautiful and free
As the wild things thou lovest,—birds and
flowers,

The forest trees, the mountains and the showers,
The sportive brooklet leaping joyously,
The benediction of the gloaming sea,
And all of nature's largess which is ours
If we but ope our hearts and let the powers
Of earth and air and ocean claim their fee

Of reverence; O spirit, through the night
As lone I watch the heavens' vasty dome,
With stars bewildering and planet bright
And comet swept from far siderial home,
Thy image haunts me till I seem to be
Wandering amid fair radiant worlds with thee.



IN PERPLEXITY

PERPLEXED and dubious, with faltering hand,
To thee, O keeper of my heart, I write,
Knowing that on the bloom of life a blight
Hath fallen that we cannot understand,
As if our love were writ on ocean sand
Instead of marble, wrought by sculptor's might,
A legend for the sad waves overnight
To sob upon till barren is the strand:

And yet the winds bear whispers unto me,
Echoes of love that haunt the tearful day
And in their sweet insistence seem to say:
"Trust on, O heart, in love's fidelity,
Peace, troubled spirit, all is well on earth,
The weeping rain portends the blossom's birth!"



CONSTANCY

OUT of dull loneliness and pain I cry
To thee alone who understand'st my plea,
Praying the priceless pledge of constancy.
In idle hours, when wanton hopes are high,
Blithe fancy, the wild honey-bee, wings by,
Feasting from bell to bell on sunny lea;
But O the beauty of fidelity,
The seal of love when lesser tokens die!

I know that beauty should be unconfined,
That love should not be cramped by paltry creeds;
But O the joy of joining mind to mind
And heart to heart with intermingling deeds
That deepen and enrich the hearts they bind
In steadfast ministry to mutual needs!



BRIGHT STAR OF HOPE

AH yes, beloved, sorrow we must know
As well as joy in God's great round of life,
But peace will blossom on the thorns of strife,
And out of anguish good will surely flow;
So if we falter o'er the cup of woe,
And poignant grief has pierced us like a knife,
And all the heav'ns with lowering clouds are rife,
Still let us watch the sky to greet the bow.

Then chide me not with base ingratitude,
Thou lode-star of my wanderings in the dark,
For thou hast been my constant shining mark
Upon the shield of night, and every mood
Has lifted up my spirit unto thee,
Bright star of hope above the troubled sea!



SPIRIT OF ALL CONSOLEMENT

SPIRIT of all consolation and all pain,
Who giveth life upon death's gloomy shore,
Who leadeth me apart from the dull roar
Of breakers on the marge of the wild main,
To look at blowing flowers on the plain
Of immortality, that I no more
May gather, still I scan thee o'er and o'er,
And tremble, fearful lest I look in vain:

For surely 'tis a dream and I shall wake,
And all thy wild luxuriance will fade,
And all the beauty round thy lips that played,
Startled, will into music sob and break,
Leaving me lone beside the sea, dismayed,
Seeking in vain to calm the heart's deep ache.



PEACE OF THE HILLS

BENEATH a mighty antique oak I lie,
Sequestered in a vale amid the hills
Threaded by silver laughing mountain rills,
My love beside me as the dusk steals nigh,
While little sportive breezes round us sigh,
And golden thrusts of sun the hillside thrills,
As calls the jay, and shy wood-warbler trills,
And chattering swifts veer round the saffron sky.

O love, how calm is nature, how serene!
What balm for weary hearts to come and rest
In the vast presence of such hallowed peace,
Where immemorial centuries have been
Here garnered in the great Earth-Mother's breast,
And cares of day in quiet glory cease!



THE WOODLAND TRYST

DEAR children of the mountain, calling quail
And gurgling thrasher in the chaparral,
And meadow-lark with reedy pastoral,
And white-throat wren with haunting falling scale,
Chant sweetly to my love adown the vale,
My bronzed wild-wood maid whose light foot-fall
Thrills me like some love-longing madrigal
While lone I rove 'mid harvest flowers frail.

As wind that woos the golden lily bell,
Or sky that circles the brodiaea blue,
Come, mountain nymph, amid the leafy dell
Be thou my heav'n and I thy flower true,—
For what were all the joys of flower and bird
If thy dear voice no more anigh I heard.



EVENING

NATURE in solemn glory wraps us round,
With beetling crags above, the stream below,
The gnarled oaks that guard the waters' flow,
The flowers trembling o'er the shaded ground,
The call of birds that near and far resound,
The greenery glistening in the evening glow,
The soft caressing summer winds that blow,
And azure dome the quiet scene to bound:

Here, O my wildwood fay, with you to roam
Until our spirits mount to greet the skies,
And, to our prayer for beauty, Heaven replies
In this vast solitude which is our home;
But O how soon 'twill fade as dies the day,
When alien seas have stolen me away!



BUTTERFLY AND FLOWER

LIKE some frail-winged butterfly I seem
Swept by the storm of fate from honeyed
flow'r,

Where I have lingered many a rapturous hour,
Imprisoned in a blissful petaled dream
Of perfume rare, whilst every tranced beam
Of glowing amber thrilled my quiet bower
With radiant beauty and my wood-fay's dower
Was sun-gold filtered to mysterious gleam:

But now through perilous heights I flit and dance,
Beating my veined wings against the gale;
Then, in the cruel hands of heedless chance,
I flutter vainly, impotent and frail:
O flow'r that harbored me in love's delight,
How art thou furled against the creep of night!



THE BRONZE CASTER

INTO this sonnet mold I long to pour
The molten words of love and let them flow
To body forth thy spirit and to show
The beauty I, entranced, have bowed before,
The haunting presence I may never more
Behold with all the thrill of life aglow,
The radiance I did once so fondly know
In joy-enamored woodland days of yore.

Now cools the metal; break th' encasing mold—
The mold that is my heart, and thus set free
The form in bronze with all its mystery,
That alien eyes its symbol may behold:
No love is vain if from it beauty starts
To thrill a few sad, world-weary hearts.



ALONE

'**M**ID alien throngs I wander on alone,—
What mockery is love that ends in pain!
The heart-ache now is all that doth remain;
My wildwood chorister hath southward flown,
The winter blusters nigh with dismal moan,
The nipping frost all blooming things hath slain,
I seek some tiny blossom now in vain,—
Sere are the hopes in spring's bright meadow sown:

But O exultant voyager, vain were I
To hold thee captive when thou wouldest away;
I watch thee winging to a bluer sky
Than folds this land of grief, sedate and gray;
Hark! the last echo of a dying song
Out of the night the wintry gusts prolong!



A NOCTURNE

SHADOWS crepuscular round woodlands fall
As twilight fades impalpably to night,
The crescent moon hangs low with wavering
light,

I hear the quivering owlet's flute-like call,
The shrill cicada chirps from evening's pall,
And dewy violets' frail perfume invite
Sweet memories round me with their moth-like
flight,
And now the jewelled sky is sparkling bright:

It is the eerie hour of mystic calm
When love, long lost, steals near through haunted
trees,
Whispering endearing woodland rhapsodies,
Breathing upon life's weariness a balm
Of tranquil influence from cares apart,
When the Great Mother takes us to her heart.



SEA BEACH MEMORIES

SALT ocean tears against our faces blown,
Gray ghostly clouds that sweep above the tide,
The fret of restless waves that surge and chide,
The sands all strewn with wreckage, and the moan
Of winds about the dunes, where, winging lone
A sea-mew trims its pens the storm to ride,
Ah such the wintry strand where we have hied
Away from haunts where herded mortals groan!

And now today I dream of that wild strand
And know 'tis sweeter where the tempest roars
With one dear comrade, than alone to stand
'Midst all th' alluring haunts on tropic shores;
O give me back the storms by my own sea,
And thy dear hand, alas, withdrawn from me!



DRUID

IN Burnham Wood I found a Druid's child
And in the autumn beeches were we drawn
From worlds apart, heart-close upon a lawn;
When Yule-tide piped adown the moorlands wild,
With Stonehenge monoliths about us piled,
We sought the mysteries of ages gone
When by the sacrificial stone at dawn
The priests poured forth the blood unreconciled.

A chaplet will I twine of mistletoe,
O priestess of the oak, for thy fair brow,
And learn from thy sweet sorcery the throe
Of sense enthrallment to a pagan vow;
Reborn we cling through ages of unrest
To the deep passion of the primal breast.



EROS

WHAT is this phantom life we all adore?
A dream of love, a scramble for the hoard!
The feast untasted smokes upon the board,
For hark! an ominous knocking at the door!

The guest unbidden many a time before
Has entered thus and drawn his flaming sword
And summoned hence the castle's haughty lord
Or lady to that dim mysterious shore.

And you and I shall follow in our turn,
But stay, the young god Eros calls us now,
And we will worship him with fervid vow
And for his benediction fondly yearn.
Perchance 'tis he who claims our parting breath
And lures us to the tranced shores of death.



THE SOWER

WHО sowed with stars the sky's abysmal void?
Who guides the fiery comet in its flight?
Who hung aloft the lantern of the night
And lit the globe of day's transcendent light?

'Twas He who holds the ocean in His hands,
Who worked therein the miracle of life;
'Twas He who through the ages fashioned man;
The universe obeys His mute commands,
His spirit joins in harmony all strife,
He is the word whence all the worlds began.

He fashioned us of spirit in His might,
And all His artistry on us employed
That you and I should know love unalloyed,—
Let not the Sower's harvest be destroyed!



A VISION

I see the garden where Gulnare strays
'Mid cypress trees upon wide lawns that sweep
Toward purple vales where lengthening shadows
sleep,
With peacocks glistening as the sun-gold plays
Upon their splendid plumes, and then a maze
Of orchids like fay children gaily leap
From shadow land, their frolic court to keep
About their queen on whom I fondly gaze.

Alas Gulnare, I am in thy thrall,
For I have peered within thine azure eyes,
Down vistas to dream gardens of the soul;
The clamor of the world no more can call
My errant fancy from the high emprise
Of gaining this fair peril-guarded goal.



EVOLUTION

MY spirit through the aeons patiently
Has labored out of star-dust, age on age,
From protoplasmic spawn amid the sea
In slow unfolding forms—a heritage
Of thrilling wonder and sublimity
As I the strife of flesh did ceaseless wage
To win soul conquest and aspire to thee
Whose beauty may the bitter feud assuage:

And O beloved, at thy yearning kiss
The urge of ages beating in my veins
Bears me along the time-worn road of bliss
To passion's heights of sweet entralling pains.
Why, all the process of the laboring earth
Was meant to make this meeting, and love's birth.



LIFE

A book, so old, yet halting, incomplete,
Is in my hands; I turn its musty leaves
As memory round its pages idly weaves
Visions of victory, spectres of defeat;
Here are tear stains and there beguiling sweet
Of dream days 'mid the gold of summer eves
In Arcady when reapers piled their sheaves
And all the season's wealth lay at my feet.

What is the gist of this unfinished tome?
What gain from all its pages? Only this—
Through loss and foil we learn to love aright;
As flowers that tremble upward from the loam
And turn their faces to the sun's warm kiss
We mortals from the seed grow into light.



HELIOS

NIIGHT witchery and the spell Selene brings
Hath caught thy heart, beloved; thou has paid
Unto the silvery goddess of the shade
Thy secret vows, bewitched by hidden things;

But dare not dream too long within her sight,—
Moon-madness falls on many a trusting one;
Arise and seek the largess of the sun!

Great Helios, Day King, in glory dight,
I lift my face unto thy presence bright,
And may thy will that lights the world be done!

For all the host of truth thy glory sings
When thou emergest, bright in flame arrayed,
And beauty praises thee in flowery glade,
And love about thy radiant mantle clings.



THOSE WEARY EYELIDS

THOSE weary eyelids, those beseeching lips,
Those languid hands that reach to mine in
vain!

Must all love's rapture die in lingering pain?
To-day the bee the sweet corolla sips,
To-night the frost its fragile beauty nips,
Yet life drags on its weary quest for gain,
Its wine all drained till but the leas remain;
Where now has vanished my Apocalypse?

Ah but the cycles swing about the sun,
And every moment holds the infinite;
'Tis yours and mine beloved, we have won
The cynosure of ultimate delight;
The world is plastic to our sculptor hands,
And love belongs to him who understands.



LOTUS DREAM

YOU surge above the dusky desert hills,
 Moon-diademed like Isis when the Nile
 Trembles resplendent, as in prayer I kneel,
A priest beside the lotus-pillared halls,
Enthralled by all the witcheries of your spells
 As nearer you advance in radiance pale,
 Till at your feet with faltering vows I fall
Where the illumined river onward rolls.

Beloved, could I stay your hastening feet
 Treading the cloudy magic of the night,
What rapture would this hour consecrate,
 Which like a vapor vanishes to naught,—
A dream as old as Edfu's crumbling walls
Where still the winging ibis, memory, calls.



FIRE

WHERE dwellest thou, O mystic spirit fire,
Or in the steel or in the flint concealed?
Nay, 'tis in mating them thou art revealed,
Thou leapest from their clash with faint desire
Till breath of life hath thrilled thee to aspire
To conquer and to make all substance yield
Before the power which thy craft can wield,
Thou genial slave or djinn unloosed in ire!

So leaps a flame when man and maiden meet,
And love engendered glows and gains in might;
First a warm hearth and then a raging flame
That ravages with all-consuming heat
The house of life and leaves us in the night
Homeless and cold and wondering whence we
came.



MIRAGE

O golden galleons, upon the glowing tide
Of regal purple shot with amber glow,
O'er arched with clouds all flushed in evening's
thro'.

The convoys of the craft wherein my bride
Is voyaging o'er the perilous waters wide,
Wafted by favoring winds that idly blow,
With dower of tropic treasure drifting slow,—
Rose-otto, pearls and silks all Indian dyed:

Soon I shall clasp thee, my exotic queen—
O see, the galleons change to forms austere,
The radiant bride upon the deck in fear
Dissolves, a wraith in the chaotic scene,
The ships roll up in mist, I stretch my hand
Toward burning wastes of disillusioned sand!



ATONEMENT

FOR Thy great gift, dear God, I give Thee
praise,—

Thy boon whereby the sculptor Man, with pain
May chisel life triumphant, and attain
To beauty in the ripeness of his days.
Benignant pain, thy sting no more dismayes
The pilgrim spirit setting forth to gain
The empyrean of his longings vain,
To greet the Lord of Day on azure ways:

But ah, how drear to cope with pain alone
Like some hoar anchorite in cave of woe!
We crave comraderie when in the throe,
We cry for spirit mate while we atone
For earth-enchantments and the glozing smile
Wherewith the lures of sense our hearts beguile.



RENUNCIATION

NOT what we claim but what we give away
Is love; ah hard the lesson is to learn,
For in the heart doth passion vainly burn,
And beauty chains us with her tyrant sway,
As for joys spent our bitter dole we pay,
And still for bliss remembered pine and yearn,
Striving in vain the haunting past to spurn
Which mocks us with its unrequited play.

Stern is the strife to rise from travail deep,
To vanquish all importunate desire,
Renounce the longings, quench the cruel fire
And jail the past in memory's dungeon keep;
But he who conquers is a spirit free,
Master of fate and lord of destiny!



BEAUTY

A H grant us beauty, let us hear and see
The angel concourse round us everywhere!
For Beauty, the elusive, lingers near,—
Her voice is in the pine-boughs' wistful sigh,
And all her secrets gurgling rilles say;
The forest bird at dawn, her vested choir,
The waves, her anthem on the windy shore!
We reap the bells her loving fingers sow.

Dear heart, be patient and in quiet serve
At Beauty's shrine, whate'er the worldly cost;
Better the body than the soul to starve,
Let all unloveliness to flames be cast,
And little acolytes of flowers will swing
Their perfumed censers in eternal spring.



ASTROLOGY

WHY cast my horoscope, Arabian seer,
Spying on fate in league with spinning stars,
In planets reading charts of joy and tears
That know no heritage bequeathed by sire,
That reck not of the mortal will to soar
In heavenly cycles through ascending tires
Where balm medicinal of love restores
The sick of soul who all life's joy foreswear?

Nay let the stars swing round their destined course,
But I will steer my way despite their spell,
Though constellations may conspire to curse,
I dare their predetermined fate to foil;
For love shall be my pilot and its might
Shall bear me on triumphant toward the light.



THE CITY

WHERE are my mountains now, oh where my
trees,

And where the love that lifted me from
earth,

Emancipated by a spirit birth
To wander on 'mid starry rhapsodies?
Lo I have sailed alone the Seven Seas,
Unmoved by mockery of feigned mirth;
And asked myself what all the pomp is worth
If gold alone hath magic power to please.

Down gorges grim 'mid jostling hordes I press,
With endless motors shuttling to and fro,—
The giddy lights, the noise, the loneliness,
The masquerade that hides the heart of woe;
Then my Aladdin's lamp I rub again
And love leaps forth across the void of pain.



THE TITHE OF LOVE

LOVE is a wind that stirs heart-leaves to song,
A tempest lashing through the forest trees;
Ah whither wings the passion-weary throng,
What is the path of winds and destinies?
And where the judge to weigh the right with wrong?
Inscrutable are fate's august decrees,
The mountain, Life, is steep, the way is long
And futile are our petty victories.

But still we climb and onward strive and yearn,
And still we love despite our dark debate,
We laugh at time and death albeit we earn
No tithe to pay the keeper at the gate.
And did I say no tithe? Why, love's the fee,—
Pay that and enter, whosoe'er you be!



THE SPINNER

BE SIDE her wheel she sat and deftly spun
The thread of life—she was so young and fair,
And love's sweet goal before her lay, unwon;
The breath of spring was in the morning air.

Ah, ceaselessly and long the whirling wheel
Drew out the thread between her fingers slim,
And in the gloam came spectres stalking, dim,
The pomp of memories of woe and weal,
The vanished hopes that still insistent steal
About the twilight on the mystic rim
Of that dark tarn amid the mountains grim
Whence muffled floats the curfew's solemn peal.

Now with her shears, grim Atropos has come
To snip the thread. The spinner's task is done!



BY THE SEA

THE flower I clasp fades in my fever'd hand,
I reach at rainbows and they melt in mist,
I write love's name upon the ocean sand.
To see it vanish, by the salt waves kissed.

Ah must I on time's headland stand alone
To contemplate the sobbing reach of sea,
The while contemptuous memory mocks at me
Above the crash of breakers and the moan
Of ocean's everlasting undertone,
Reiterating love's futility
In answer to my ineffectual plea
That falls unheeded on a heart of stone?

Then from the pall of a fog a sea-bird's cry—
Or some lost soul from out the darkling sky!



VISION

FAREWELL old dreams, adieu enchanted hopes,
My castles in the air evaporate,
My jaded fancy cannot cope with fate
But blindly in the mist and shadow gropes;
My heart, a very owl, sadly mopes
Amid the ruins of the temple gate—
The temple love that I did consecrate
And then saw crashing down the golden slopes.

So let it crumble, but it breaks not me,
For out of desolation and despair
Shall I uprear a pile, of symmetry
More perfect, wrought on lines more true and fair;
Aye, still the ageless task, time out of mind,
With spirit eyes to see, though love be blind.



DISENCHANTMENT

IN the vague shadow-land 'twixt sleep and death
All saffron-lighted and with purple deeps
Where sorrow's tower mystically sweeps
Cloudward as night steals nigh with hushed breath,
My Lady Asphodel her vigil keeps
And by the Lake of Memory silent weeps.

I too beside the waters of the night
Stand meditative on the misty shore
And look on her whom I may clasp no more
In the fond ecstasy of love's delight.
O sweet illusion, why do we adore
These mocking phantoms, glistening cold and frore,
That lure us in the madness of our plight
To wander on where joy has taken flight?



ONCE I LISTENED

ONCE I listened to the elfin rain laughing to the flower folk,
And little children prattled in the language of Christ about me,
And the sun kissed away the mist clouds that would flout me,
And down the valley was a rain-bow arching low to an oak,
And my heart was in tune with dancing stars and into song awoke,
And I spoke with a faith so strong that none could doubt me,
For I was king of the birds and flowers and they could not live without me;
My name was Love and it seemed as if all the world was in tune when I spoke.



But now I hear only the drip of blood on fields of woe,
And the sobs of fatherless children and widows who
moan,
And the thunder that shakes heaven and earth is
not of God,
It is a diapason of kings, the mighty roar of their
death throe,
It is Antichrist come with the shibboleth of war to
shriek and groan;
Nay speak no more of love for your words sound
like mockery and fraud.



LOVE'S LEGACY

HERE is the fruit of love, gleamed from the tree
 Of life, the living witness of the dead,
 The dear departed joy, reborn to plead
With lips and eyes of innocence, and pray
With all the arts that childhood can employ
 To lift dull souls, who daily onward plod,
 Out of the endless round of worldly pride
A little nearer the eternal sky.

My treasures, ah what wealth is left to me
 In these, her children, her embodied love,
 The gift she gave me ere she went away
 On the far pilgrimage as if to prove
That nothing matters in the eternal round,
Once the great universe of love is found.



SUNSHINE

YOU come to me like the sun at the morn
When the orange poppies are sparkling with
jewels of the dew
And the oriole, aflame, sings jubilantly of you,
You come to me out of the night forlorn
And in the radiance of your smile a joy is born,
For you are the golden sunshine in the vast of blue,
And the warmth of your laughter is of the same
resplendent hue;
At your touch springs beauty to grace and adorn.

Ah would that I might sublimate darkness to fire!
Teach me the spirit alchemy of joy,
Little Sunshine, how to transmute the base metal of
desire
Into the gold of content with no alloy,
Teach me what you have learned from the matin
songs of the birds;
And she answers in golden laughter, but is stilled with
leaden words.



“STAY, O MOMENT!”

BEAUTY cannot be imprisoned,
Love cannot be confined,
Life is a free thing like the sea and the wind,
We dance and laugh and weep, and the joys we have
visioned
Loom up like ships in the mist and as phantoms
fade,
But our hearts are dauntless and we are not afraid.

So when with the rapture of your lips I thrill,
When my heart knocks at the portal of your breast,
When I feel the brooding peace of eternity, at rest
In your arms, with closed eyes and the world so still,
When I am wrapt about with you in the Infinite Will,
I know it is but a fleeting vision of the soul's quest,
But I take no heed of tomorrow, for today is best,
And in the great whole, love comes not to destroy but
to fulfill.



IMMORTELLES

HOW fragile and how delicate a thing
Is love, as frail as cobweb hung with dew,
Airy as summer cloud amid the blue,
Sweet as the honey bought with many a sting,
A bird alert to flee on startled wing,
A flower the heedless autumn breezes slew,
Leaving a withered stem where late it grew,
A song once prized which I no more may sing:

But in the spirit world there is no loss,
We harvest all our dreams in beauty bright;
Although the seed in the cold earth we toss,
The flowers of memory quicken with the light
Of the returning sun of love to show
The eternal garden, bright for them that know.



DREAM FLOWERS

UPON my face dream petals softly fall
Out of the night of memory and bear
Fond tokens blown caressingly anear
With pungent odors of the woods that thrill
Amid the burgeoning rapture of the dell,
Where wild pink current blooms, with spring afire,
Bend o'er the glory of the shooting star,
While errant breezes lilies nodding lull.

The wine-red trillium and the hound's tongue blue
Shrink in the shadow by the singing brook,
And on green-swarded hills the poppies glow
And buttercups in golden rapture wake;
Dreamwise they smile, but O what boon 'twould be,
My Flower Queen, could they awaken thee!



ABOVE THE CITY

ABOVE the city, above the jagged roof-tops I
rise,

At my feet the river winds with miniature
craft of steam,

In the streets the ants of humanity crawl as in a
dream,

Far, far below me love lies, for I am old and wise,
I have stripped the mask from faces with laughter
and cries,

Night has fallen and my search-light has shot its
beam

Down into the deeps where swarming millions teem,
I peer as from the zone of Mars with alien eyes.

Ah love, thy little day of anguish is over, thy hour of
bliss,

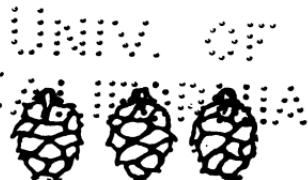
Lay aside the bride robes and don the shroud;
Inconsequential fly above the feast, why so proud?



**The Master whisks his brush, and who to-morrow shall
thy buzzing miss?**

**O fie upon me, the city and its people are illusions of
the night,**

**But the gods are masquerading there, and I follow
them into the infinite.**



BEYOND THE MISTS

GRAY driving clouds and endless drip of rain,
The scrawny naked boughs of dreary trees,
The weary wind with autumn threnodies
Sobbing across the lonely reach of plain,
O'erburdened with the waning season's pain,
Ah, here I wander over cheerless leas,
Alone with all of sorrow's mysteries,
Surging unceasing through my troubled brain.

But then amid the pallid mist I see
The wraith of her who leads me unto light,
Of her who bids me trudge the moors of care
Toward the mountain slopes of victory
Where she awaits me on the farthest height—
Ah golden day when I shall clasp her there!



THE ESOTERIC DOOR

LIKE fragrant April rain, your spirit clear
Cleanses the air and coaxes into light
The timorous flower throng in flounces bright,
Bidding them flame in beauty without fear
Since all frail beings unto you are dear.

With sympathy all pain would you requite,
With tenderness all wrongs would you make right,
Stroking the troubled brow of care to cheer.

Baffled and lost in labyrinthine ways,
I fall upon the threshold of your heart
And pause before that esoteric door;
Within is joy; without, unquiet days
And all the toil of unaccomplished art
To whet my vain desires forevermore!



THE PORT

If in my heart I knew that I should hold
 Unswerving in love loyalty to thee,
If I might claim the rare nobility
Of such devoted trust and clasp the gold
Of thy bright life and tenderly enfold
 One set apart by nature's high decree
To serve the pure ideal eternally,
How for past mockery would I be consoled:

But siren calls from ocean grottos far
 Still lure me on, the endless voyage to dare,
I sail like Sinbad on adventurous quest;
There is no port, unless it be a star
 Across infinity's vast sea of care
Where in the light of love I may find rest.



FOREST DREAMING

AGAIN I rove amid the redwoods' shade
Where mighty pillars, dwarfing Karnak's pile,
High rear their fluted shafts in dim defile,
With sunlight peering down the solemn glade
To flame with magic touch each spray betrayed,
And seek my thoughts with nature to beguile
Where scented shrubs anear the river smile
And thrushes gurgle low as if afraid.

Alone I stray with treasured dreams of bliss,
Communing with my maid of gentleness
Who with this sweet consolement of her kiss
Hath eased the strain of life's too heavy stress
And made these trees a shrine where love may gain
A deeper splendor, purified by pain.



SUMMER WIND

DREAMING upon the tawny rolling crest
Of summer hills, and gazing at the Bay
Sweeping in silver splendor far away,
With Tamalpais clear profiled in the west,
And, fog-enveiled, the mystic Golden Gate,
And Alcatraz lone watching ships go by,
And San Francisco in its splendid state—
I hear through wild oat fields the salt wind sigh.

O never-wearying wind from ocean's breast,
You should not sigh all summer in dismay,
The meadow-lark still pipes his blithesome lay,
And I sing with him though with heart oppressed,
For love is like the wind that may not wait,
Blown ever onward by importunate fate.



PERFUMES

TO breathe the soul of flow'rs from fragrant limes
And pink petunias, dew-drenched at the dawn,
And pendulous pale datulas that down
Elusive moon-illumined garden lanes
Exhale their breath erotic unto lands
Warm with the wistful summer's languerous swoon,
And honeysuckle's joy-distilling vine,
And roses dreaming of alluring loves!

Ah this were rapture if with you the bliss
I shared in sweet communion, while the air
Was drenched with fragrant honey dew to bless
Our spirits leaping with elate desire;
But joys companionless invite in vain,
And nature's largess yields but keener pain.



THE CYGNET SONG

WHAT hope, to seize the shining river sands
And see them sparkle, till alas I learned
'Twas fool's gold that my bitter toil had
earned!

And then in scorn I flung it from my hands
And followed phantom lights through goblin lands,
So madly for the goal of life I yearned,
Forever baffled and unceasing spurned,
My lute still clasped with all its broken strands.

But in the treasury of my tired heart
One joy remains to speed life's devious way
Unto the vision of the brighter day
When I aspire to play a worthier part—
Faith still is firm in love that suffers long,
And dying, love shall be my cygnet song.



SHASTA LILY

SHY lily of the forest, I would clear
A path to let the sun come thrilling through
The shadowed silentness and thus endue
Thy regal radiance with heaven's cheer,
Stealing away the dew-drop's pearled tear
To set it in the heaven's crown of blue;
With joyance I would utterly imbrue
The shining glory of thy presence dear.

My Shasta lily, may wild warblers chant
Above thy head, and at thy feet the song
Of glacial streams run silverly along
O'er boulders, fern enlaced, where ouzels pant
And trill in ecstasy, and balsam breath
Wafts thy wild redolence, sweet unto death.



THE RESURRECTION OF THE HEART

I pray that love be given me in abundance, that I
may send it afar,

That I may bestow it upon my children fair,
And on all children who laugh and sing in faith;
I would give it to old men and women, with no fear,
To them within whose hearts the spirit fire
Burns calmly ere they gently venture forth
To keep the great tryst with Death and end life's
feud,
To dauntless men and maidens who pass me to and
fro;

O may I cherish on my hearth the glowing spark
Whereof Buddha and the Man of Nazareth spake,
That it may warm me when I lie down to sleep,
And in the House of Life may I dwell with it in sight,
For the resurrection of the heart is in the ascension
into love's heaven;
O may this beatitude unto me be given!



THE TRINITY

OUT of God's infinite dream uprolls a universe,
And man emerges from the womb of the
brute,

In the germ of the primal cell is his root,
And unto life is he wedded for better or for worse;
Yea the flesh that envisages him is his blessing or
curse;

He is the master gardener who has planted many
a shoot

Bearing blossoms and weeds, ripening to sweet or
bitter fruit,

And out of the ground has he digged gold for his
purse.

But O brothers, not from our gardens nor from our
gold may we gain the consummation of our
dream;

We must win salvation as co-creators with God,



**Laboring at our cosmos as apprentices of the Builder
Supreme**

In whose August Presence we are reverent but **not
over-awed;**

**We must vivify the sublime trinity shining upon us
from above,**

**Living in passionate adoration of beauty and truth
and love.**



LOVE DAUNTLESS

THROUGH every test would I love gloriously
And ne'er rescind what once the heart affirmed,
Uncompromising would I be though spurned,
Still loving though my love would me betray,
Through life and death to all would I be true,
Harboring but beauty in my heart and mind;
Though what I cherished rend me and deride,
Yet would I tender love without alloy.

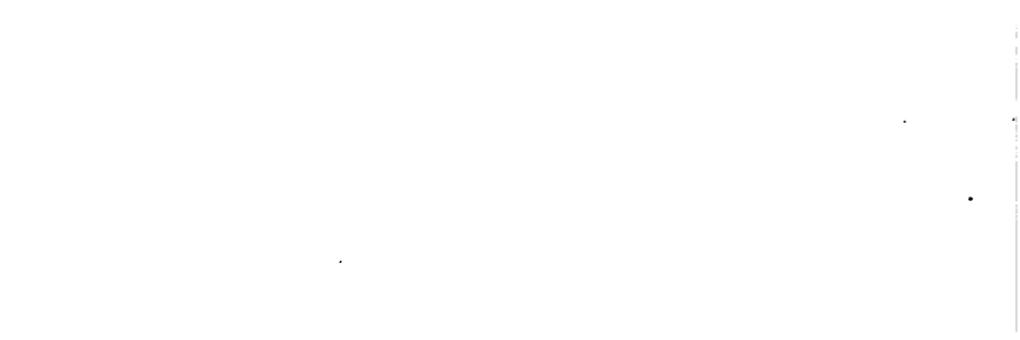
And when I falter on the path of light,
To Thee I turn and ask but grace to grow
Secure in love that marks not time nor fate,
Nor seeks a reckoning for a broken vow,
But from good will's perennial fountain flows
With love's elixir for all earthly woes.



BENEDICTION

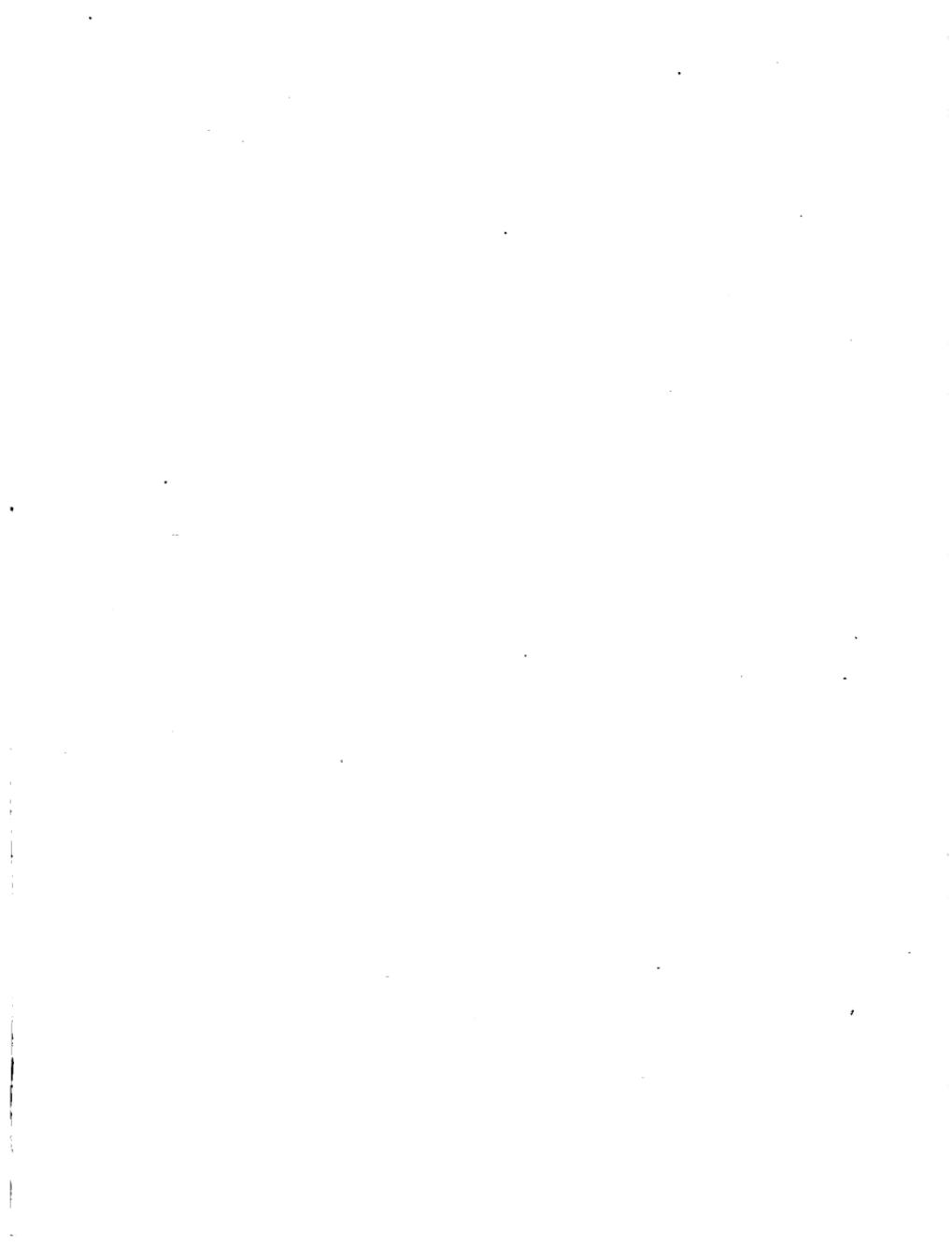
YE peerless titans on the granite cliffs,
Guarded amid Sierra peaks, alone
In silent meditation hast thou grown,
As time, the weariless destroyer drifts
And through her ageless fingers idly sifts
All life but thine, thy tops by tempests blown
Where Jesus walked in Galilee, unknown
The slow maturing splendor of thy gifts:

Thee I invoke; O teach me from thy lore
Patience and strength and courage to endure,
For I would love, aye more and ever more,
In humbleness amid thy roots grow pure,
In aspiration yearning toward the light
Enkindled and uplifted by thy might.





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